

Delaware Sea Level Rise Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary
December 16, 2010

(Approved January 20, 2011)

Attendees:

Tricia Arndt, DE Coastal Programs
Dave Carter, DE Coastal Programs
Richard Collins, Positive Growth Alliance
Sarah Cooksey, DE Coastal Programs
Barbara DeHaven, DE Economic Development Office
Jerry Esposito, Tidewater Utilities
Andrea Godfrey, Office of Management and Budget
Brenna Goggin, DE Nature Society
Roger Jones, the Nature Conservancy
Michael Kirkpatrick, DE Dept. of Transportation
Susan Love, DE Coastal Programs
Bill Lucks, DE Realtor's Association
Robert McCleary, DE Dept. of Transportation

Rick Perkins, DE Div. of Public Health
Mike Powell, DNREC Division of Watershed Stewardship
Kurt Reuther, DE Dept. of Safety and Homeland Security
Bob Scarborough, DE Coastal Programs
John Taylor, DE Chamber of Commerce
Pam Thornburg, DE Farm Bureau
Chad Tolman, DE League of Women Voters
Kelly Valencik, DE Coastal Programs
Wyatt Hammond, Broadkill Beach resident
Nancy Lawson, Pickering Beach resident
Kurt Bertino, Kitts Hummock resident
Ralph Satterfield, Pickering Beach resident
Al Izzarone, South Bowers resident

Materials Distributed:

Agenda
Meeting summary from November meeting
Draft ground rules
Draft decision making process document
Draft advisory committee responsibilities document
Vulnerability assessment potential data list and example map
FEMA Programmatic Issues Related to sea level rise handout
Revised Sea Level Rise Adaptation process diagram

*all materials distributed available online:

<http://www.swc.dnrec.delaware.gov/coastal/Pages/DESLRAdvisoryCommittee.aspx>

Action Items:

- **Advisory Committee Members** will review and provide comments by January 5th on draft member responsibilities and decision-making documents
- **Advisory Committee Members** will review the list of data to be used for the vulnerability assessment and provide additional data sources by January 5.
- **Advisory Committee Members** will fill out Doodle poll for schedule upcoming meetings:
- **Delaware Coastal Programs** staff will make vulnerability maps distributed at meeting available on website.
- **Delaware Coastal Programs** staff will make agreed upon changes to documents and ground rules

- **Delaware Coastal Programs** will send an electronic version of the white paper that was developed to determine the DNREC sea level rise scenarios.

Key Discussion Points:

Delaware Bay Working Group: Sarah Cooksey briefly updated the group regarding the legislative committee for Delaware Bay Beach Management, who is currently meeting to find short and long term solutions to issues of flooding and drainage at Delaware Bay beach communities from Broadkill to Woodland Beaches. Sarah is a member of the committee, and committed to act as a “conduit” between the Sea Level Rise Advisory Committee and the Delaware Bay Working group to avoid duplicity. The finding and recommendations of the Delaware Bay Working Group will likely feed into the larger effort of the Sea Level Rise Advisory Committee.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) process

Mike Powell, DNREC’s Flood mitigation program manager, presented information regarding federal flood programs in the state of Delaware and implications of sea level rise for those programs. FEMA floodplain maps do not proactively address future sea level rise. There were discussions regarding the financial issues of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and ways that individuals and communities can qualify for this program. There was also considerable discussion about how the availability of NFIP influences decisions of how and where to build homes on the coast, the contradictions in the FEMA programs and when homes would be abandoned after repetitive flooding.

Dave Carter reported that he has been asked to review a proposed study at University of Delaware that would compare insurance rates inside and outside the Coastal Resources Barrier Act (CRBA) areas to determine the effect of a hidden subsidy from the National Flood Insurance Program for building in high risk areas. The CRBA was passed in the mid 1980’s to discourage new development on undeveloped areas of barrier islands. The group felt this study would be informative and Dave will report back as to whether the study is funded.

Old Business

The meeting notes from the November meeting were approved. Meeting notes will be called “meeting summary” rather than “meeting minutes”.

As requested at the last meeting, representatives from New Castle, Kent and Sussex Counties were invited to participate, as were two members of the General Assembly. New Castle County has agreed to participate; DCP staff are still waiting to hear back from the others.

The Sea Level Rise Adaptation Process Diagram was updated to reflect comments received at the last meeting and via email. There was additional discussion regarding phase 1, gathering information. Rich Collins shared information from an article that analyzed satellite images of global sea levels which vary by up to 300 feet in some parts of the world and reminded the group to be mindful that scientists’ projections of sea level rise are based on relatively new research. Dave Carter and Bob Scarborough provided additional clarification of this data and several members asked for copies of the article to read for themselves. Susan Love referenced the “white paper” that was drafted which explained how and why

the sea level rise scenarios used for the DNREC policy were chosen. She will email this document to the group.

It was asked if the DNERR has wifi access. The facility does not provide internet access due to strict security measures implemented by the state network. Sarah Cooksey noted that a computer with printer and internet access will be provided at upcoming meetings.

Logistical Details and Process

Draft ground rules were presented to the Committee for discussion and revision. The draft rules included basic courtesies such as not interrupting, respecting dissenting opinions and avoiding side conversations. Committee members also wished to find a way to capture questions that are outside of the scope of the discussion at hand or technical questions that required additional background research. It was agreed to maintain a “parking lot” list for these items and follow up on them at the next meeting. The following ground rules were agreed to:

- Every Advisory Committee Member Participates
- Members are forthcoming with information and opinions
- Dissenting opinions are valued and respected
- Members listen to ideas without judging
- One person speaks at a time
- Members will not participate in side bar conversations
- Meetings and breaks start and end on time
- Cell phones are set on silent or vibrate
- Unanswered questions will be placed in “parking lot” and will be followed up on at the next meeting

There was also discussion of confidentiality concerns. Susan emphasized that this is an open and public process; however, any proprietary information from the agencies will not be shared publically.

Membership Roles and Responsibilities

Committee members were asked to read and discuss the draft Membership and Responsibilities document provided in their packet. Some questioned why implementation and funding was included as this was thought to be purely a planning process. Susan explained that the hope was some members would commit to helping with the implementation phase. Dave Carter added that committee members may wish to be a part of the grant writing and review team process. It was agreed to remove the reference to implementation and funding from the membership responsibilities document. Additionally, the first bullet on page 3, which stated members shall “support the goals of the sea level advisory committee” will be changed to members shall “define the goals” in light of the fact that some agency missions may conflict with some goals. Additional comments should be emailed to Susan by January 5th.

In order to better outline the goals of the committee, each member was asked what their individual and/or agency goal was for this planning process. The responses were recorded and will help to define the collective goal.

Decision-making Process

A draft decision making document was distributed and discussed.

Susan Love explained that the draft decision making document was adopted from previous collaborative initiatives. The Advisory Committee will be determining the content and final recommendations of a plan for sea level rise in the State; therefore, it is important to understand how collective decisions will be made. The group discussed the difference between “consensus” and “consent” and how to build agreement among agencies with conflicting or competing missions. The make-up of the committee was also discussed as it relates to voting fairness because the committee now contains 15 government representatives and 9 business/environmental agencies. Several potential solutions were presented for discussion including voting in blocks, requiring super majority, and allowing for a write-up of dissenting opinions.

It was clarified that the final document, a Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan, will be a DNREC document whose intent is to be embraced and utilized for change by member agencies and others.

The importance of having members at all meetings was emphasized and Advisory Committee members were asked to designate an alternate to attend meetings when they are unavailable.

Based on this discussion, the following changes will be made to the draft: Additional comments should be sent to Susan by January 5.

- The bulleted list will be pared down to the essentials.
- Third paragraph after the bulleted list will be reworded to reflect that not all decisions will be able to be supported by all advisory committee members.
- Add ability for dissenting opinions to be included in documents

In addition, there was discussion regarding scheduling votes. Major decisions (approval of recommendations for example) will be scheduled so that all advisory committee members have time to review information with their agencies/constituents so they can adequately reflect the views of their agency or constituents.

Vulnerability Assessments

Susan provided an overview of the vulnerability assessment process, and the steps DCP had taken so far. An example map was provided, as was a list of the available data layers. Committee members were asked to review the list, and if they knew of additional layers that might be useful to email Susan. Specifically, economic and public health data would be helpful. Bill Lucks offered that data was available on estimated real estate values in affected areas. Dave Carter stated that data on lower floor elevations would be important to flood risk to structures. It was noted that information tables would make example maps more helpful to the group- for instance, # of Underground storage tanks or facilities affected or miles of evacuation routes impacted, etc.

The Wilmington Area Planning Council, a regional transportation planning agency, has completed a draft vulnerability assessment for transportation routes in New Castle County, DE and Cecil County, MD. The report is not available to the public at this time but may be presented at a future meeting.

Kurt Reuther shared the Homeland Security formula to assess risk which is: $R \text{ (risk)} = T \text{ (threat)} - V \text{ (vulnerability)} \times C \text{ (consequence)}$.

Public Comment

Kurt Bertino thanked the advisory committee for beginning the adaptation planning process and hopes the outcome will provide useful information to legislators and other decision makers.

Next Meeting:

A Doodle meeting schedule email will be sent to all members to schedule meetings for the next several months.